

Birthday

B. David Kombako

Candles, candies, and cakes
balloons and paper plates
sweet little squeals of delight
that crack the still afternoon air

wishes evaporate from one heart
to another
the past is fondled with nostalgia
the future contemplated with caution

a lone balloon drifts upwards
into unknown paths
guided only by the soft breeze
gathering memories as it floats away
to eternity

B. DAVID KOMBAKO is from Papua New Guinea and graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa with a master's in sociology in 2004. His master's thesis was a critique of the discourse on "failed states," drawing on experiences from Papua New Guinea. He is currently a teaching assistant at the University of Papua New Guinea, and is involved in a research project that is focused on ecotourism in village communities and HIV/AIDS in urban areas. His research interests include ethnicity/multiculturalism, nation and state, symbolic interactionism, the sociology of knowledge, tourism, contemporary entertainment, and indigenous capital and critical social theory. He hopes to return to the United States in the not too distant future to pursue a PhD in political sociology.